



## Tac team readies for work on river

**K**CPD officers work all over Kansas City's 319 square miles, on both sides of the Missouri River that divides the city. But until now, no officers worked *on* the River.

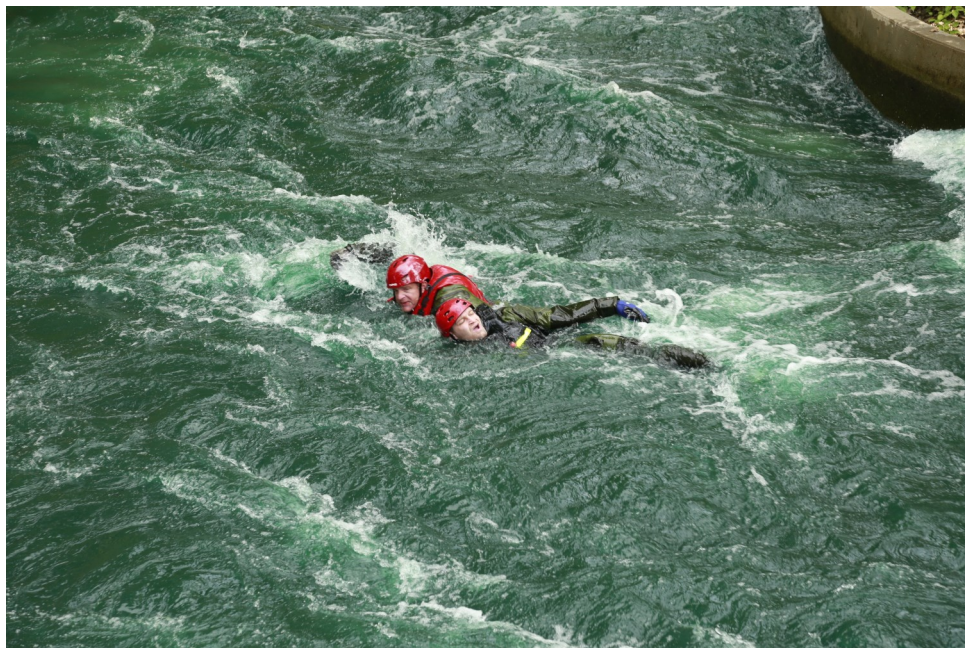
A group of nine Tactical Response Team officers now have trained to conduct law enforcement on water. The "River Tactical" group is composed of Tactical Team members who volunteered for the extra training and were able to swim 300 meters in less than 10 minutes.

The River Tactical group arose from a grant from the Kansas City Port Authority, Captain Daniel Gates said. The grant paid for seven dry suits and five buoyant, bullet-resistant vests, as well as some training. The Port Authority is trying to generate more commerce and barge traffic along the Mighty Mo in Kansas City, but they want it to be secure. Before, the only law enforcement agency anywhere near Kansas City that could work on water was the Missouri State Highway Patrol's Water Patrol, and they would have to be deployed from outside the city.

"Before this, we really had no resources or training for any critical incident or threat to our infrastructure along the River," Sergeant Will Hewitt said.

River Tactical members got to test their skills during a regional training exercise in July that simulated terrorists planting bombs on bridge pylons by boat. Then in August, they got to put their skills to use in real-life.

The Missouri River was closed during the Air Show around the Downtown Airport. While the show was going on, police received a call of a suspicious boat on the river inside the closed area. The caller said the boat pulled up along the shore and the occupants came in and out of a wooded area carrying things. Using the Fire Department's boats, four tactical officers and a Bomb



**Sergeant Steve Schramm pulled Officer Brock Nelson as part of a towed swim rescue exercise during swift-water training for the new River Tactical group. The group trained at the Fury of the Nile ride at Worlds of Fun.**

and Arson sergeant responded. They discovered the people in the boat were simply trying to watch the airshow, and the women were taking cardboard onshore to shield themselves while they went to the bathroom. Police informed the boat's occupants they were in a restricted area, and they cooperated and left. Officers found nothing suspicious. But then as they prepared to leave, they saw a boat caught on debris that was hung up on a bridge pillar. Thanks to their training, the officers were able to

assist the Fire Department with rescuing that boater.

The Fire Department will continue to be responsible for water rescues, but now police can assist if needed. KCFD taught KCPD's River Tactical members boat operations and swift water operations. They have set aside boats KCPD can use. Some of their swift-water training takes place at the Fury of the Nile ride at Worlds of Fun. Sergeant Hewitt said the training is vital in case something happens and an officer falls into the river.

"You jump into the Missouri River for the first time, and it's pretty intimidating," he said. "It has a very strong current and is very muddy and hard to see."

Captain Gates said River Tactical officers can attend to most law enforcement issues on the river, from drunk boaters to armed suicidal people. They're even getting entry training for barges.

"It's very different from a house," Captain Gates said.

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# Grant will fund testing of rape kits

A sizeable grant will pay for testing more than a thousand sexual assault evidence kits that had not previously been analyzed because of limited resources.

The Manhattan (New York) District Attorney's Office announced \$38 million in grants nationwide to eliminate backlogs of untested "rape kits." The Kansas City Missouri Police Department received more than \$337,000. The grant will go into effect October 1 and will last for two years. Funds for the grant came from the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's settlements with international banks that violated U.S. sanctions.

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department was one of five major-city police departments across the country who agreed to release statistics in May about evidence kits in sexual assaults that have not been analyzed. The Joyful Heart Foundation, founded by Law and Order actress Mariska Hargitay, initiated an End the Backlog program nationwide to have all rape kits forensically tested. Part of that program was to show the number of untested kits. Kansas City reported 1,324 untested kits.

Scott Hummel, DNA Section supervisor at the Kansas City Regional Crime Laboratory, applied for the grant on KCPD's behalf. He said Kansas City is not unusual in its number of untested rape kits. Indeed, the other four police agencies who responded to the Joyful Heart Foundation's request in May – police from Charlotte, N.C.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Portland, Ore.; and San Diego, Calif., reported backlogs of between 1,019 and 2,873 kits.

Because of limited resources, the testing of rape kits had been prioritized based on prosecution needs. The kit of a rape survivor who is ready to move forward with investigation and prosecution is tested as quickly as possible by the Crime Lab. Because of the trauma of the experience, some rape survivors are not yet ready to pursue investigation and prosecution. A little less than half of Kansas City's untested rape kits



**Evidence kits for sexual assaults in which victims did not want to prosecute await testing at the Kansas City Regional Crime Laboratory. Resource restrictions prevented DNA analysts from testing most of those kits, but a new grant will pay for the kits to be analyzed and entered into a national database. This could lead to the possible identification of serial rapists.**

fell into that category.

"Many of those whose kits are untested are high-risk victims," Hummel said. "And a lot we can never find again. They've moved out of our jurisdiction without making a report."

The kits are collected at hospitals by certified Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners. They typically include swabs of intimate areas, hair standards, the victim's DNA profile and other items depending on the circumstances – such as a blood or urine sample if the victim was drugged. Police take custody of this evidence, but sometimes the victims never file a report. Police store all of this evidence, however, at least until the statute of limitations on the case expires. If a rape survivor decides he or she wants to pursue the case at a later date, the rape kit is tested promptly.

But thanks to the grant, those untested cases now will be analyzed. Why would that be necessary, if not for prosecution?

"Frankly, the idea is to identify serial rapists," Hummel said. "It's possible we've only identified a suspect in one case, but DNA from those untested kits would show he's involved in three, four, five other sexual assaults. ... The idea is to populate the database with possible sexual assault suspects."

That idea already is coming to fruition. The FBI recently offered to help KCPD with its backlog in rape kit testing, analyzing 30 kits at a time. Just through that small pilot program in a short period of time, police were able to use DNA to link a serial rapist to a fifth sexual assault. The victim of that assault had never reported it.

The grant will pay for KCPD to outsource rape kit analysis, along with some overtime for KCPD's DNA analysts. Hummel said his staff would be unable to do all the analysis themselves and keep up with their current workload.

## Director Netzel receives honors at STEMMY Awards

**K**ansas City Regional Crime Lab Director Linda Netzel received the Ground-Breaker Leadership Award at the second annual STEMMY Awards Gala Sept. 24. The Gala recognized Kansas City-area women who are setting trends and breaking barriers in their STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics or medicine) fields. The event is presented by the Central Exchange. Central Exchange is a Kansas City-based non-profit that provides the venue and voice for women seeking to reach their full personal and professional potential. The Ground-Breaker Leadership Award that Netzel received goes to a woman with 20 or more years of post-graduate experience in a STEMM field who holds a leadership position in her organization and has made significant contributions to the STEMM community. Director Netzel was nominated for the award by Sergeant Paul Luster of the Crime Lab.



## Entrant Officer Class 154 Graduates



**E**ntrant Officer Class 154 graduated September 3 with seven officers being sworn into the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, and three sworn into the Independence Police Department. Valedictorian of the class was KCPD Officer Corey Sanders, and the Richard Fletcher Director's Award went to KCPD Officer Luke Abouhalkah.

## 38 promoted at ceremony

**T**hirty-eight department members were promoted at one of the largest ceremonies ever on August 11 at the Police Academy Auditorium. On that day, Chief Darryl Forté promoted a supervisor, 23 sergeants, seven captains, five majors and a deputy chief. See the "Officially Speaking" section on p. 4 for a list of everyone who was promoted.



The 11- and 8-year-old daughters of Sondra Zink supported their mother as she was promoted to captain at the August 11 ceremony.

## Upcoming Events

September 20  
**Broadway Bridge Run**

October 8  
**25-Year Ring Ceremony**

October 13  
**Board of Police Commissioners Meeting**

October 15  
**Crime Commission Luncheon**

October 24  
**Crime Stoppers Arrowhead Event**

The Informant is a publication of KCPD's Media Unit  
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## Officially Speaking

### Awards

#### ***Life-Saving Award***

Officer Samantha Parkhurst

#### ***Meritorious Service Award***

Former Sergeant Jim Carmody  
Sergeant Timothy Riepe

#### ***Certificate of Commendation***

Sergeant Robert Gibbs

### Retirements

Officer Brent Thompson  
Administrative Assistant Carla Godfrey

### Obituary

Officer Charles Williams  
Retired Captain John "Bill" Bartlett  
Sergeant John Paul

### Promotions

#### **To Supervisor**

Damion Ragsdale

#### **To Sergeant**

Aaron Benson  
Corey Carlisle  
Jennifer Crump  
Andrew Gore  
James Green  
Sebastien Hanriot  
Craig Holmer  
James Keller  
Michael Lenoir  
Jeffrey Littlejohn  
Melanie Madonia  
Tim McClure  
Joseph Merino  
Jason Quinn Moran  
Maurice Oatis  
Howard Periman  
Justin Pinkerton  
Marcus Smith  
Jonah Staerkel  
Teddy Taylor  
Lawrence Weimhold  
Clint Westgate  
Anthony White

#### **To Captain**

Cindy Cotterman  
Tim Hernandez  
Michael Sean Hutcheson  
Ron Legg  
Monte May  
Tim Riepe  
Sondra Zink

#### **To Major**

Mark Francisco  
Richard Scott Glaeser  
David Lindaman  
Louis Perez  
Mike Wood

#### **To Deputy Chief**

David Zimmerman

The mission of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department is to protect and serve with professionalism, honor and integrity.